

Serial No. 09/443,793
Amendments to the Claims

1-27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently amended) Apparatus for providing a non-threaded fluid seal between two port faces, comprising:

a) a generally planar, one-piece plate, the plate having an opening and a plurality of bolt holes, the opening having a boundary, the plate having a pair of surfaces which are parallel to each other,

b) a one-piece non-threaded annular seal disposed within the boundary of the opening, and extending around the entire boundary of the opening, the one-piece seal having a thickness which is at least as large as a distance between said surfaces of the plate, and

c) a non-threaded structural support ring disposed within the annular seal, the support ring being made of metal,

wherein the support ring includes at least one orifice which provides a fluid connection between said opening and said annular seal,

wherein the support ring has an inner surface which is not in contact with the seal, wherein the support ring has a diameter, taken at the inner surface, which is generally uniform except at the orifice,

wherein the annular seal comprises the sole means for providing a seal between said two port faces,

and wherein the orifice has a longitudinal axis which is generally parallel to said surfaces.

29. (Currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 28, wherein the annular seal comprises a flexible O-ring/ ~~and wherein the support ring comprises a metal ring.~~

30. (Previously added) The apparatus of Claim 28, wherein the support ring has an outer portion which faces an inner portion of the annular seal, and wherein the support ring is chamfered on said outer portion.

31. (Previously added) The apparatus of Claim 30, wherein the support ring has two chamfers, both chamfers making an angle of about 45° with an axis of the support ring.

32. (Currently amended) Apparatus for providing a non-threaded fluid seal between two port faces, comprising:

a) a generally planar, one-piece plate, the plate having an opening and a plurality of bolt holes, the opening having a boundary, the plate having a pair of surfaces which are parallel to each other,

b) a one-piece non-threaded annular seal disposed within the boundary of the opening, and extending around the entire boundary of the opening, the one-piece seal having a thickness which is at least as large as a distance between said surfaces of the plate,

c) a non-threaded structural support ring disposed within the annular seal, the support ring being made of metal, and

d) a fluid component which abuts the plate,

wherein the support ring includes at least one orifice which provides a fluid connection between said opening and said annular seal,

wherein the support ring has an inner surface which is not in contact with the seal, wherein the support ring has a diameter, taken at the inner surface, which is generally uniform except at the orifice,

wherein the annular seal comprises the sole means for providing a seal between the plate and the fluid component,

and wherein the orifice has a longitudinal axis which is generally parallel to said surfaces.

33. (Currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 32, wherein the annular seal comprises a flexible O-ring/ ~~and wherein the support ring comprises a metal ring.~~

34. (Previously added) The apparatus of Claim 32, wherein the support ring has an outer portion which faces an inner portion of the annular seal, and wherein the support ring is chamfered on said outer portion.

35. (Previously added) The apparatus of Claim 32, wherein the support ring has two chamfers, both chamfers making an angle of about 45° with an axis of the support ring.